EPIC COMICS

#3 IN AN EIGHT-ISSUE LIMITED SERIES

ELEKTRA Assassin™

ELEKTRA 3
OCTOBER 1986

$1.50 | $1.75 CANADA

MARVEL®

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ELEKTRA Assassin

—THE LOST YEARS—

SOVIETS BLAME S.H.I.E.L.D. IN MUNITIONS EXPLOSION

SAN CONCEPCION, South America—Soviet envoy Vladimir Jakkoff today charged the United Nations espionage Agency S.H.I.E.L.D. with the detonation of forty tons of munitions in San Concepcion Bay last night.

The explosion reportedly killed four guards. Ensuing fires blazed for twelve hours.

Jakkoff claims that the bodies of two American S.H.I.E.L.D. operatives were found by local police, and that "conclusive evidence" was discovered on their bodies that proved that the incident was engineered by S.H.I.E.L.D.

"The bodies of the American terrorists were stolen from the morgue," said Jakkoff.

Local S.H.I.E.L.D. representatives refused to comment on the incident.

S.H.I.E.L.D. has excluded the Soviet Union from participation in its operations since 1968.

San Concepcion Authorities refused to draw any connection between last night's munitions explosion and the assassination of Presidente Carlos Huevos five months ago.

ELEKTRA: ASSASSIN™ Vol. 1, No. 3, October 1986. Published by MARVEL COMICS GROUP, James E. Galton, President, Stan Lee, Publisher, Michael Hobson, Group Vice-President, Milton Schiffman, Vice-President, Production. OFFICE OF PUBLICATION: 387 PARK AVENUE SOUTH, NEW YORK, NY 10016. Published monthly. Copyright © 1986 by Marvel Comics Group, a division of Cadence Industries Corporation. ELEKTRA: ASSASSIN™ (including all prominent characters featured in this issue), and the distinctive likenesses thereof are trademarks of the MARVEL COMICS GROUP. All rights reserved. Price $1.50 per copy in the U.S. and $1.75 in Canada. No similarity between any of the names, characters, persons, and/or institutions in this magazine with those of any living or dead person or institution is intended, and any such similarity which may exist is purely coincidental. This periodical may not be sold except by authorized dealers and is sold subject to the condition that it shall not be sold or distributed with any part of its cover or markings removed, nor in a mutilated condition. PRINTED IN CANADA.

CHAPTER THREE:

ROUGH CUT

FIRST THEY REMOVE MY **SPINE.** THEN MY **ORGANS**, ONE BY ONE. THEY ROLL MY **LIVER**--

--AROUND THEIR **WALDOES** LIKE IT'S SOMETHING THAT GREW BY ACCIDENT IN THE **REFRIGERATOR**--

--THEN **FRACTIONATE** IT, TELLING ME I WAS WORKING ON A CASE OF **PSOROSIS.**

WHAT THEY **REPLACE** IT WITH LOOKS LIKE A BUNCH OF **CIGARETTE BUTTS** STUCK IN A WAD OF **CHEWING GUM.**

THEY GET THEIR **BIGGEST** KICK FROM REWIRING MY **NERVOUS SYSTEM** AND CHECKING MY **PAIN CENTERS**--

--FINALLY THEY POP THE FAKE **ARMS** INTO THE FAKE **SHOULDERS** AND SNAP THE FAKE--

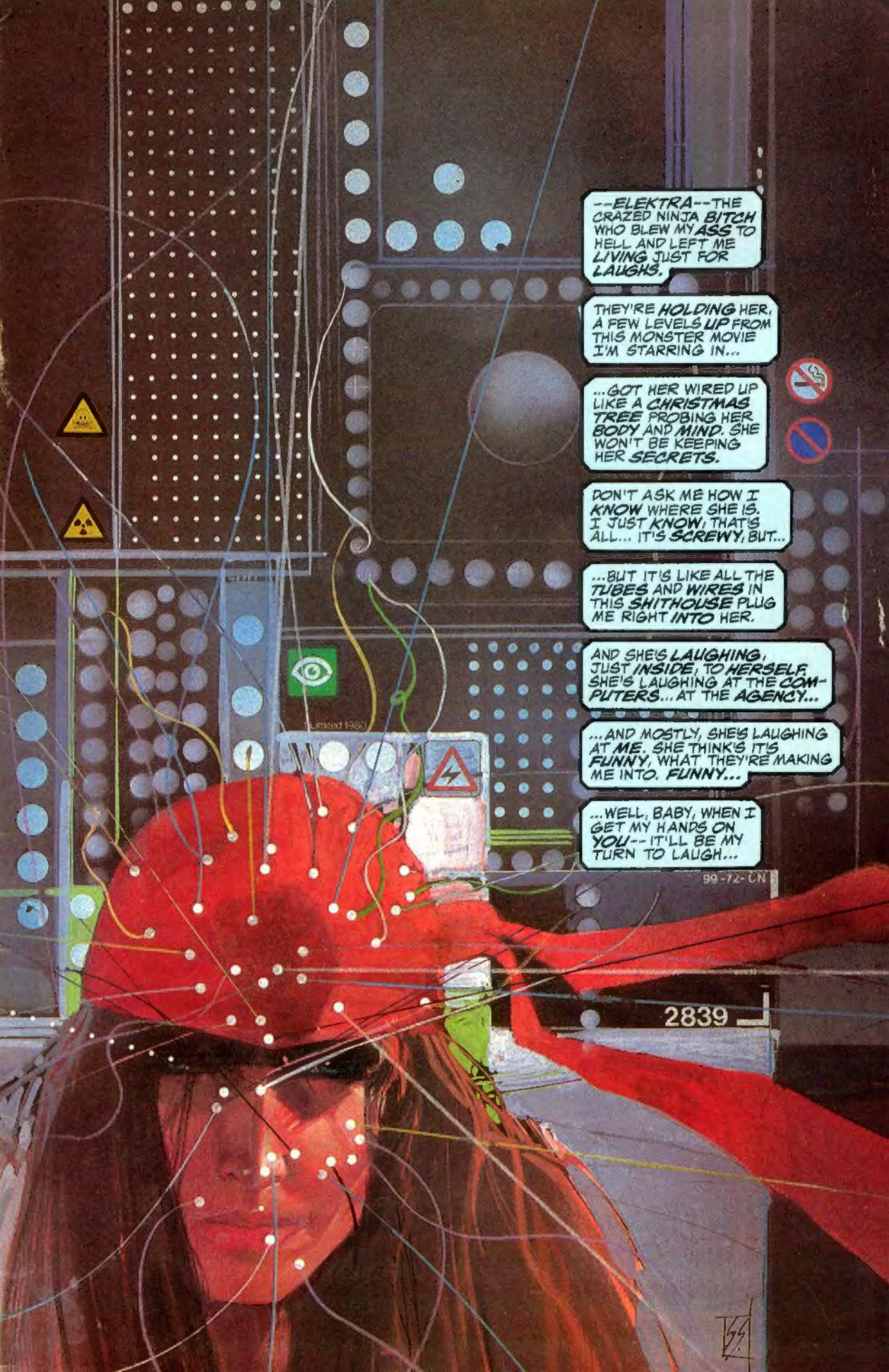
--**LEGS** ONTO THE FAKE **HIPS** AND **STAPLE** THE WHOLE MESS **TOGETHER** AND I'M AS CLOSE TO **HUMAN**--

--AS I'LL EVER BE AGAIN. ALL THE WHILE I THINK ABOUT **ELEKTRA**--

BLOOD FLOW IS GOOD...

COMMISSARY'S SERVING MEAT LOAF AGAIN...

HOW'S THE BRAIN ACTIVITY?


--ELEKTRA--THE CRAZED NINJA BITCH WHO BLEW MY ASS TO HELL AND LEFT ME LIVING JUST FOR LAUGHS.
THEY'RE HOLDING HER, A FEW LEVELS UP FROM THIS MONSTER MOVIE I'M STARRING IN...
...GOT HER WIRED UP LIKE A CHRISTMAS TREE PROBING HER BODY AND MIND. SHE WON'T BE KEEPING HER SECRETS.
DON'T ASK ME HOW I KNOW WHERE SHE IS. I JUST KNOW, THAT'S ALL... IT'S SCREWY, BUT...
...BUT IT'S LIKE ALL THE TUBES AND WIRES IN THIS SHITHOUSE PLUG ME RIGHT INTO HER.
AND SHE'S LAUGHING, JUST INSIDE, TO HERSELF. SHE'S LAUGHING AT THE COMPUTERS... AT THE AGENCY...
...AND MOSTLY, SHE'S LAUGHING AT ME. SHE THINK'S IT'S FUNNY, WHAT THEY'RE MAKING ME INTO. FUNNY...
...WELL, BABY, WHEN I GET MY HANDS ON YOU-- IT'LL BE MY TURN TO LAUGH...
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...SHAMELESS, INCOMPETENT AND *STUPID*--

MY FAKE *SKIN* HASN'T HAD TIME TO *COOL* WHEN I'M HAULED INTO *BEAKER'S* OFFICE.

HE WANTS ME TO KNOW EXACTLY WHAT HE THINKS OF MY RECENT PERFORMANCE IN THE FIELD...

SHAMELESS, INCOMPETENT, AND *STUPID*. IF YOU WEREN'T AN *IDIOT*, I'D SUSPECT YOU OF *TREASON*.

YOU HAD *EVERY* CHANCE TO MAKE CONTACT WITH THE AGENCY. *EVERY* CHANCE.

AFTER ALL WE'VE DONE FOR YOU... OH, NO, GARRETT --DON'T YOU *DARE* COMPLAIN.

THOSE ARMS AND LEGS WILL OUTLAST YOUR *HEAD*--AND OUT *PERFORM* IT, AS WELL.

WE'VE GONE TO *GREAT* EXPENSE IN GIVING YOU A *BODY*. WE HAVE EVERY RIGHT TO EXPECT A *RETURN* ON OUR INVESTMENT.

"I'LL BE *STUDYING* YOUR FULL REPORT, GARRETT. AND THIS TIME WATCH YOUR *GRAMMAR*.

"OH, AND ONE MORE ITEM OF BUSINESS, GARRETT--IF WE WANT YOU TO SHOOT *ELEPHANTS*, WE'LL *ISSUE* YOU ONE OF THESE CANNONS. TILL THEN, YOU'LL CARRY A *.38*, LIKE ANY OTHER OPERATIVE."

AND DON'T YOU DARE TRY TO SMOKE IN MY OFFICE.

TWO HOURS AND EIGHTEEN NICOTINE FITS LATER HE LETS ME GO.

IT'S ANOTHER SWEATY NIGHT IN THE SOUTH AMERICAN GUNPORT OF SAN CONCEPCION...

...UPSTAIRS THE **NEWLYWEDS** ARE BANGING AWAY AND MAKING SPANISH **LOVE NOISES.**

I'M HOPING MY **CEILING** HOLDS OUT AND WISHING THEY'D OIL THEIR **BEDSPRINGS.**

TAK.

TAK

MY **LAST** UP-STAIRS NEIGHBOR I LIKED A LOT BETTER.

HE NEVER MADE ANY NOISE UNTIL HE **SHOT** HIMSELF.

I'M WATCHING DAY OLD AMERICAN TV ON THE **VIDEOTAPE** THAT BEAKER GAVE ME TO SHOW ME HOW MUCH THE AGENCY **VALUES** ME.

WHAT I'D **REQUESTED** WAS A **TRANSFER** TO THE STATES...

...AFTER **DALLAS** AND **FALCON CREST** HAVE GIVEN ME THE CLOSEST I'M LIKELY TO GET TO A **LAUGH** TONIGHT, I SETTLE DOWN FOR THE **NEWS...**

AFTER A **WALKING TOUR** OF SPANISH HARLEM; **KEN WIND** SPOKE TO REPORTERS...

SOME POST-KENNEDY LIBERAL FAGGOT WHO'S PROBABLY NEVER BEEN OFF THE **EAST COAST** IS TALKING **FOREIGN POLICY.**

LAYING INTO SAN CONCEPCION'S VERY OWN UNITED STATES AMBASSADOR **REICH...**

I AM **APPALLED** BY THE PRESIDENT'S DEMONSTRATED **SUPPORT** OF THE AMBASSADOR.

THAT THIS SORT OF CONSCIENCELESS **ENDORSEMENT** OF A MERCENARY, TERRORIST-SERVING **DICTATOR-SHIP** CAN CONTINUE...

"...IS AN *INDICTMENT* OF THE CURRENT ADMINISTRATION. AMERICA IS *STRONG* --BUT OUR STRENGTH DOES NOT COME FROM CLANDESTINE DEALS WITH UNSCRUPULOUS *GOVERNMENTS.*

"SO MAKE *ME*, PRESIDENT, AMERICA. VOTE FOR *KEN WIND*. AND *REMEMBER*-- NOT *WIND* LIKE A *WATCH*, BUT *WIND*--LIKE THE *AIR*..."

THE *BOURBON* HITS ME JUST THE WAY I WANT IT TO-- I'M *GOOD* AND DEAD BEHIND THE EYES, AND IT'S EASY NOT TO WORRY ABOUT HOW I'M GOING TO COVER MY ASS AT THE DEBRIEFING TOMORROW MORNING.

FOR A WHILE I COME AND GO...

...THE NEWS WINDS DOWN... THERE'S SOME SLANT *MOVIE*...

SEEK THE *DARKNESS* and be *SILENT.*

GOD DAMN...

...LAST THING I WANT TO *HEAR* ABOUT IS *NINJA*...

...I FADE *OUT* AGAIN, BORED *SHITLESS*...

...WHEN I WAKE, THE *SOUND'S* OUT ...NOTHING LIKE *AGENCY* TECHNOLOGY...

...THEN I WATCH THE PART...

...WHERE THE BITCH PUNCHES A *HOLE* IN GOWER'S *BODY ARMOR*...

...ONLY THAT'S ALL *WRONG*. I WAS WATCHING AMERICAN TV, NOT A TOP SECRET VIDEO FILE OF THE INCIDENT THAT'S THROWN *SECURITY* INTO A *TAILSPIN*.

IT'S *ESPECIALLY* WRONG BECAUSE I DON'T REMEMBER *STEALING* THE FILE OR EVEN *WANTING* TO.

MAYBE I'M LOSING MY *MIND*.

MAYBE I GIVE A SHIT.

I GET BEAKER'S **WAKE UP CALL** AT **FOUR-THIRTY.**

I CHANGE MY **SHIRT** AND HEAD TO THE **BASE** AND SHOVEL IT **DEEP.**

JESUS, YOU COULD GET **MILK** FOR THE COFFEE; THIS **POWDERED** SHIT IS--OKAY, OKAY. ROLL IT.

S.H.I.E.L.D

PRELIMINARY VIDEO REPORT, OPERATION SCRAMBLED EGGS, SPECIAL AGENT GARRETT REPORTING... NO SIR, I AM NOT HUNG OVER...

OUR INVESTIGATION BEGAN WITH THE ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENTE **CARLOS HUEVOS.** BEYOND THE POLITICAL IMPORTANCE OF HUEVOS TO OUR SIDE...

...THIS INCIDENT WAS CAUSE FOR CONCERN BECAUSE OF THE UNUSUAL **MANNER** IN WHICH HUEVOS WAS MURDERED. WHILE RIDING A **MERRY-GO-ROUND...**

...HE WAS STRUCK THROUGH THE NECK BY A **CROSSBOW BOLT**--CHRIST, WHAT'S WITH THIS **CROPPING?** YOU GET SOME **FILM STUDENT** TO PUT THIS TOGETHER?

THE **ANGLE** OF THE WEAPON'S **ENTRY** INDICATES THAT IT WAS FIRED FROM **ANOTHER** CARNIVAL RIDE, SEVERAL HUNDRED YARDS DISTANT...

...AND SPINNING IN THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION. THIS, OBVIOUSLY, WOULD REQUIRE AN UNUSUAL LEVEL OF SKILL. MORE ON THAT SKILL IN A MOMENT...

...NO, NO. WRONG SHOT. JESUS, BEAKER, WHERE DO YOU *FIND* THESE PEOPLE?...

...YES SIR, I *DO* KNOW WHERE YOU FOUND *ME*... HERE WE GO... MY PARTNER AND I INTERROGATED ONE *JULIO GONZALES*, WHO CONFESSED TO HIRING A *WOMAN* TO KILL HUEVOS...

...USUAL POLITICAL REASONS... BREAKING OFF ON HIS OWN, MY PARTNER SOMEHOW TRACKED THE KILLER TO *SAN CONCEPCION HARBOR*. HE PHONED ME. I RUSHED TO HIS AID.

I FOUND PERRY HANGING FROM A *POST* BY HIS *BAYONET*, WHICH WAS SHOVED THROUGH HIS *HEAD*. MISSING WAS THE *IMPLANT* THAT WOULD HAVE TOLD US HOW HE FOUND HER.

I PURSUED THE KILLER, ONLY TO BE DISARMED. SHE APPARENTLY WENT ON TO DETONATE A HUGE MILITARY SHIPMENT IN THE HARBOR. I WAS CAUGHT IN THE BLAST.

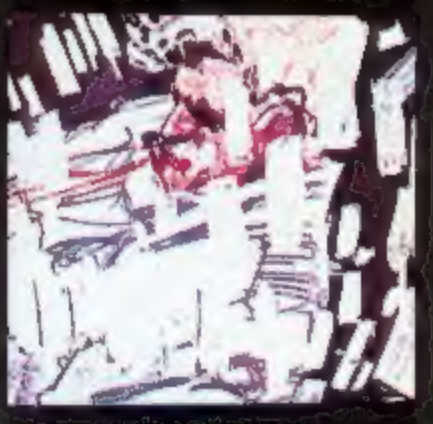
AS *EXTECHOP* WENT TO WORK ON ME, THE KILLER BROKE INTO THE BASE, STOLE MY IMPLANT FROM THE SURGEONS, AND RAIDED THE INFORMATION BANKS.

THE METHOD OF HER BREAK-IN REMAINS UNKNOWN. SHE EVIDENTLY FORCED *LT. EUGENE CATTIVO* TO HELP HER WITH THE COMPUTERS.

CATTIVO RESISTED HER. SHE BROKE HIS NECK WITH HER HANDS.

SGT. MARK DANZINGER, ON NIGHT WATCH, DISCOVERED HER AND WAS PROPELLED BY MEANS UNKNOWN INTO A GLASS DOOR, UNCONSCIOUS.

YOU'LL SEE THAT DANZINGER IS THE *LUCKIEST* RENT-A-MARINE TO WORK FOR THE AGENCY THIS WEEK. PLEASE NOTE THE BREAKING *GLASS*--



--IT NEXT APPEARED IN THE CHESTS OF PRIVATES *DWINELL*, *KIMBELL* AND *DUBOIS*, WHO RESPONDED TO A *YELLOW ALERT* THAT FOLLOWED DANZINGER'S FAILURE TO REPORT.

MOMENTS LATER, A DOZEN ARMORED *AGENTS* ARRIVED, TO FIND THE *EMERGENCY GATE* LOWERED. IT TOOK THEM TEN MINUTES TO BURN THROUGH.

AGENTS **NOSALLE** AND **TRISOLINI** LED THE CHARGE. THE ROOM WAS DARK. THEY WERE UNAWARE OF THE POISONED GLASS UNTIL IT PUNCHED THROUGH THEIR BOOTS.

MACHINE GUN FIRE THEN KNOCKED THEM BACKWARD INTO THE REMAINING FORCE; NOT PENETRATING THEIR ARMOR, BUT CAUSING MOMENTARY CONFUSION.

SOMETHING THAT WAS NOT A MACK TRUCK SLAMMED INTO THE AGENTS, SENDING THEM SPRAWLING. NONE OF OUR BOYS HAD YET GOTTEN A SHOT OFF.

PITMAN THEN FELL TO HIS KNEES, DISEMBOWELED. ***NEWTON'S*** HEAD, CLEFT FROM HIS SHOULDERS, STRUCK THE FLOOR.

SHE WAS USING A SHORT JAPANESE ***SWORD***, SWINGING IT MORE SWIFTLY THAN OUR CAMERAS COULD RECORD.

BERGER, STEINGUT, WEINER, AND ***FOX*** FELL FROM SWORD WOUNDS INFLICTED IN THE NEXT TWO SECONDS.

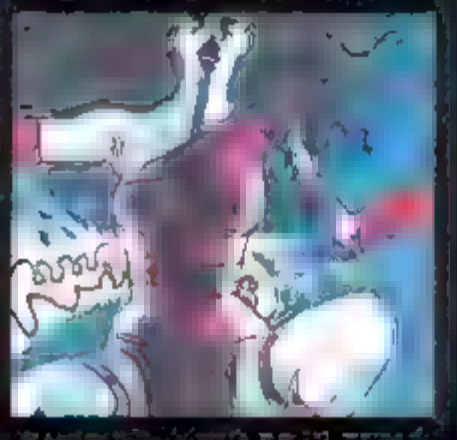
STERN KEPT HIS HEAD, FIRING HIS .38 AT POINT BLANK RANGE. IF HE'D USED A ***MAGNUM***, HE'D HAVE ***STOPPED*** HER...

...YES SIR. ***REGULATIONS.*** I KNOW SIR. THE BULLET GRAZED HER SKULL, DAZING HER.

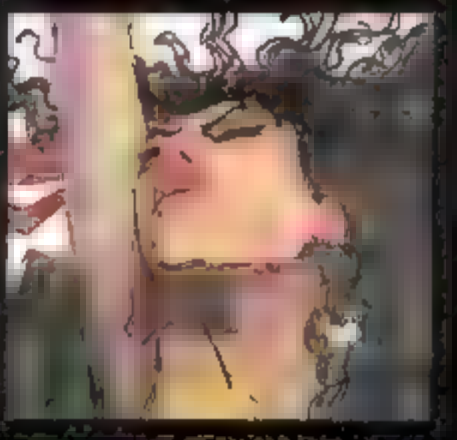
SHE WAS MOVING IN ON ***STERN*** WHEN AGENT ***STASSEN*** NAILED HER WITH A ***TASER.***

AS SHE COLLAPSED TO THE FLOOR SHE THREW HER ***SWORD*** INTO STASSEN'S ***LEG.***

STASSEN MANAGED TO HOLD THE TASER TRIGGER. ***GOWER*** MOVED IN TO FINISH HER OFF.



SHE PUNCHED HER HAND THROUGH GOWER'S BODY ARMOR. HER HAND WAS REACHING UNDER HIS RIB CAGE FOR HIS HEART WHEN SHE PASSED OUT.



DEAD WERE CATTIVO, DWINELL, KIMBELL, DUBOLS, PITMAN, NEWTON, STEINGUT, AND GOWER.

SEVERELY WOUNDED WERE NOSALLE, TRISOLINI -- THE MEDICS GOT THE POISON OUT -- BERGER, FOX WEINER, AND STASSEN.

SUFFERING ONLY MINOR INJURIES WERE STERN AND DANZINGER. LIKE I SAID -- LUCKY.

THE ***WOMAN*** IS NOW IN THE HANDS OF THE ***TECHNOS***. HER ***IDENTITY*** HAS YET TO BE ASCERTAINED... SEEMS HER ***FINGER-PRINTS*** HAVE BEEN SURGICALLY REMOVED ...NOR HAS HER ***PURPOSE*** IN INVADING THE BASE.

THE TECHNOS ***HAVE*** DISCOVERED AN UNUSUAL ***NARCOTIC*** IN HER BLOOD. THIS MAY ACCOUNT FOR HER REMARKABLE ***SPEED*** AND ***FEROCITY***. MY GUESS IS THAT SHE'S A ***PSYCHOTIC*** --

--DRUGGED AND CONDITIONED AND THROWN AT US BY THE SOVIETS TO CREATE AGENCY ***CONFUSION*** AND ***PARANOIA***. ANY QUESTIONS, BEAKER?

BEAKER HAS QUESTIONS. A LOT OF QUESTIONS.

AND HE DOESN'T LIKE A SINGLE ONE OF MY ***ANSWERS***.

YOU'RE TESTING MY ***PATIENCE***, GARRETT.

YOU'RE ***INSULTING*** MY ***INTELLIGENCE***.

I'VE GIVEN YOU ***TREMENDOUS*** LATITUDE...

BUT ***REALLY*** -- THE ***SOVIETS***?

YOU HAVE A LOT MORE TO **TELL** US, DON'T YOU NOW?

THIS **WOMAN** IS MORE THAN A GARDEN-VARIETY **PSYCHO-PATH.**

SIR, I'VE TOLD YOU EVERYTHING I..

HONESTLY, I...

NO. SHE'S TOO **CLEVER.** TOO **ORGA-NIZED.**

YOU'RE **LYING,** GARRETT.

THE **SOVIETS.** REALLY.

I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE **UP** TO, GARRET, BUT YOU'RE DAMN **CLUMSY** ABOUT IT.

TAKE THIS AS MY **WORD--**

IF THIS IS AS **IMPORTANT** AS I **THINK** IT IS--

--YOU'LL GO BACK TO **PRISON** WHERE YOU **BELONG.**

JESUS, GARRETT..

SOVIETS CHRIST...

RIGHT. LIKE THEY WEREN'T IN BED WITH HUEVOS, **TOO.**

ALWAYS **FUN** TO HEAR **BEAKER** GIVE **GARRETT** THE BIG CHEW...

MEAT-LOAF AGAIN...

LET THEM TALK.

THEY'RE JUST **SCARED...**

...THEY'RE **ALL** SCARED OF ME...

CHRIST, WHAT THE HELL AM I GOING TO DO...

...AND WHY DIDN'T I TELL **BEAKER...** HER **NAME?**

...WHY DIDN'T I TELL HIM THE **ARMS SHIP-MENT** SHE BLEW WAS SPONSORED BY **AMBASSADOR REICH...**

...WHO I BELIEVE SHE'S TRY-ING TO...

H.I.E.L

...WHAT THE **HELL?...**

THE **SCREEN** --JUST FOR A SECOND--

--NO...JUST DIDN'T GET ENOUGH **SLEEP...**

"HE LIT HIS CANDLE IN THE RAIN AT **WOODSTOCK** ...SPILLED HIS VERY OWN BLOOD AT **ALTAMONT**...

"...BURNED HIS **DRAFT CARD** AT **BERKELEY**...MARCHED ON **WASHINGTON**, SHOULDER TO SHOULDER WITH HIS BROTHERS AND SISTERS.. CARRIED OUR **BANNER OF PEACE** THROUGH THE **BULLETS AT KENT STATE**...

"AND YES, HE **CRIED**-- FOR **JOHN**... FOR **MARTIN**... FOR **BOBBY**...

"HIS IS THE **SOUL** OF THE **LOVE GENERATION**-- THE **SPIRIT OF SIXTY-EIGHT**. KEN WIND. DEMOCRAT. LIBERAL. THE NEXT **PRESIDENT** OF THE **UNITED STATES**.

"**REMEMBER** AMERICA... NOT **WIND** LIKE A **WATCH**, BUT **WIND**--LIKE THE **AIR**...

...WHY?...

...WHY THE HELL AM I *PROTECTING* HER...

...WHY DIDN'T I MENTION AMBASSADOR *REICH*... I THINK SHE'S PLANNING TO *KILL* HIM...

..I CAN'T LET THAT *HAPPEN*...

...THIS HAS BEEN A PAID POLITICAL ANNOUNCEMENT...

...NO... CAN'T LET THAT HAPPEN...

...GUESS I'M JUST KEEPING THINGS SIMPLE...

...UNTIL I BREAK INTO LEVEL ONE AND SHUT THE POWER OFF...

...AND SPRING HER...

...NOW WHY'D I THINK THAT?...

...CRAZY... I'D NEVER...

...STARTLING MOVE, AMBASSADOR REICH INVITED PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE KEN WIND TO "SEE WITH HIS OWN EYES" THE SITUATION IN SAN CONCEPCION.

WHILE THE PRESIDENT WAS CLEARLY DISPLEASED, WIND WAS QUICK TO AGREE...

I'M THRILLED BY THIS OPPORTUNITY TO SHOW MY RESPECT AND CONCERN FOR THE PEOPLE OF THE THIRD WORLD.

...NEVER...

...I'M GOING...TO KILL THAT BITCH...

...THAT GOD DAMN...

...DOESN'T EVEN LOOK THAT GOOD...

...TOO LONG AND STRINGY...

...TOO DAMN MANY MUSCLES FOR A WOMAN...

...HELL...

...MAN COULD BREAK HIMSELF ON A WOMAN LIKE THAT...

...NO...

...GOING TO KILL THE BITCH...

...TOO MANY MUSCLES FOR A...

"PRELIMINARY VIDEO REPORT. PHYSIOLOGICAL: SUBJECT JANE DOE; CROSS-REFERENCE OPERATION SCRAMBLED EGGS. DR MARION WRECK, MEDICAL DIRECTOR, SAN CONCEPCION BRANCH, DICTATING.

S.H.I.E.L.D

"SUBJECT IS CAUCASIAN FEMALE IN HER EARLY TWENTIES. UPON ADMISSION, SHE SUFFERED FROM NUMEROUS CUTS AND CONTUSIONS, INFECTION, ACUTE MALNUTRITION, AND TOXIFICATION.

"SHE HAS RESPONDED QUICKLY TO INTRAVENOUS NUTRITIVE AND DETOXITIVE TREATMENTS. HER VITAL SIGNS ARE NOW THOSE OF A PERFECT PHYSICAL SPECIMEN.

"THERE ARE, HOWEVER, BEWILDERING PHYSICAL ABNORMALITIES. FIRST IS A COMPLETE LACK OF FINGERPRINTS. THIS INDICATES GENETIC SURGERY, FAR ADVANCED FROM EXISTING MEDICAL CAPABILITY

"THE MOST INTRIGUING DATA CAME FROM A ROUTINE TEST OF HER BLOOD. HERE WE FOUND AN UNCLASSIFIED CHEMICAL COMPOUND, AT WAR WITH HER WHITE CORPUSCLES.

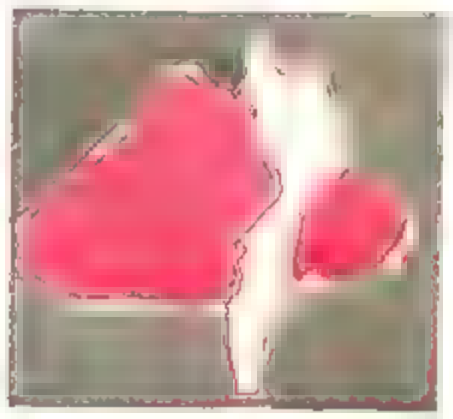
"IDENTIFIABLY NARCOTIC, THIS COMPOUND HAS AFFECTED HER **BRAIN** IN WAYS THAT ARE, TO SAY THE LEAST, UNPRECEDENTED IN MODERN SCIENCE...

"AN EXPLANATION OF THE STRUCTURE OF THE HUMAN BRAIN AND OF ITS CONTEXT IN NATURE IS HERE REQUIRED. THERE IS IN ITS STRUCTURE A DIRECT LINK BETWEEN MAN AND BEAST--EVEN BETWEEN MAN AND **SNAKE.**

"WERE I TO SHOW YOU A SNAKE'S BRAIN, YOU WOULD PROBABLY BE UNABLE TO TELL THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN IT AND THIS --THE **BRAINSTEM**, OR "**LIZARD BRAIN**", OF A HUMAN.

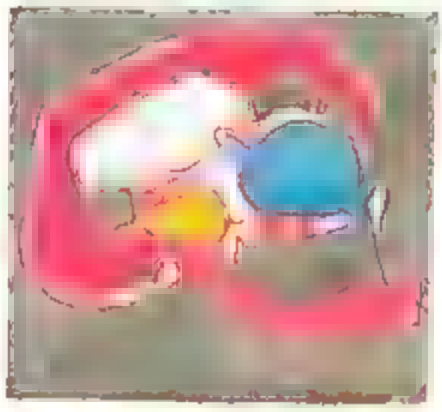
"IN EVOLUTIONARY TERMS, IT IS FIVE HUNDRED MILLION YEARS OLD. IT CONTROLS THE MOST SIMPLE SURVIVAL FUNCTIONS. IT IS ALERT, VITAL, AND UNREASONING.

"WRAPPED AROUND IT IS THE **CEREBELLUM**, OR "**LITTLE BRAIN**". STILL PRE-HUMAN BY MANY AGES, IT GIVES OUR PHYSICAL SKILL, AND THE RUDIMENTARY MEMORY OF A BEAST



"SQUATTING ON THIS IS THE **LIMBIC SYSTEM** OR "**MAMMAL BRAIN**", WHICH **MUTATED**, TWO HUNDRED MILLION YEARS AGO, FROM A TINY PART OF THE **LIZARD** THAT CONCERNS ITSELF WITH WHAT THE LIZARD SMELLS--

"--INTO A **MAZE** FROM WHICH COME OUR MOST **PRIMAL** EMOTIONS--OUR MOST **SAVAGE** RESPONSES SEX AND VIOLENCE ARE **JOINED** HERE, IN WHAT MANY REGARD AS THE BIRTHPLACE OF **INSANITY**.



"IT IS THE **CEREBRUM**, WITH ITS LAYER OF NERVES, THE **CORTEX**, THAT MAKES US **HUMAN**. ALL OUR HIGHER **THOUGHTS**, OUR SOFTER **EMOTIONS**, COME FROM ITS TWO HEMISPHERES.

"THE **COMPOUND** IN THE SUBJECT'S **BLOOD** HAS HAD EFFECTS ON HER BRAIN THAT ARE **UNIQUE** IN THEIR **INTENSITY** AND **SPECIFICITY**.

"IT STIMULATES THE **OLDER** PARTS OF HER BRAIN, HER **LIZARD** AND **MAMMAL** BRAINS, INTO **VIOLENT** ACTIVITY, ALL THE WHILE LEAVING THE CEREBRUM **UNAFFECTED**.

"HER **LIMBIC SYSTEM** LIT UP LIKE A **CARNIVAL RIDE**-- MORE ACTIVITY THERE, AND OF A STRANGER NATURE, THAN YOU'LL FIND IN A **SCHIZOPHRENIC**.

"MOST ASTONISHING OF ALL, A LASERPHOTO **BRAINSCAN** REVEALED MICRO-CHANGES IN THE PHYSICAL **STRUCTURE** OF HER BRAIN.

"HER BRAIN SEEMED TO BE ADAPTING TO THE MORE IMMEDIATE, SENSORY NEEDS OF AN **ANIMAL**.

"ALL EFFECTS HAVE BEEN REVERSED BY ANTITOXINS, SO WE MUST CONCLUDE THIS **NARCOTIC** EFFECTED A CASE OF **GENETIC REGRESSION**.

"BREAKDOWN OF THE COMPOUND IS DETAILED IN THE WRITTEN REPORT. PLEASE NOTE THAT WE HAVE SYNTHESIZED IT, AND REQUEST PERMISSION TO CONDUCT LIVE ANIMAL EXPERIMENTS..."

S.H.I.E.L.D

GARRETT-- WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE? IT'S THREE IN THE--

JESUS, MAN YOU LOOK LIKE *HELL*.

LET ME IN THERE, MORGEN.

LET ME SEE HER.

LAST THING I NEED IS *MORGEN* GETTING *PISSY* WITH ME.

GOT THE BETTER PART OF A *FIFTH* IN ME.

JUST AS SOON FLATTEN HIS KIKE FACE.

BEEN A *NIGHT*, HONEY. KEPT *DOZING* AND WAKING *UP*. TRIED TO KEEP THE *PICTURE* OF YOU OUT OF MY *MIND*.

WATCHED *THREE'S COMPANY* AND *BOSOM BUDDIES*.

THEY KEPT TURNING INTO *YOU*.

SHIT...

I'D HAVE FINGERED *NOW* IF I *NEED* TO TURN *NINJA SECRETS*

IT'S NOTHING ELSE.

PICTURES...KEPT SEEING *PICTURES* OF *YOU*, AND I'M *DRUNK* ENOUGH SO YOU LOOK *GOOD* TO ME...

...SEEN BETTER. TOO MANY *MUSCLES*...

...THEN I GOT TO *LAUGHING* ...RIGHT OUT *LOUD*, SCREW THE *NEIGHBORS*, ESPECIALLY THE *HONEYMOONERS* UPSTAIRS...

...LAUGHING...THINKING OF *PERRY* AND ALL THE REST...

...HOW *FUNNY* IT IS...

...TO THINK OF A GOD DAMN *KILLING MACHINE* AS A...

...BLEW MY ASS TO HELL ...MADE ME... GOD DAMN MACHINE...

...RIGHT IN MY BED. I SMELLED YOU... LIKE YOU WERE RIGHT THERE WITH ME...

...STRINGY MUSCLED WHORE...

...SCREWING ...WITH MY BRAIN...

...SPLATTER YOUR BRAINS ALL OVER THOSE WIRES...

...MORGAN COULDN'T STOP ME... NOBODY COULD...

...I'M IN CHARGE...

...SPLATTER YOUR BRAINS IF I WANT...

SEE?... HOW'S IT FEEL...

...GOD DAMN WHORE...

...GOT YOU WHERE I WANT YOU...

...AT...

...MY MERCY...

YES, GARRETT...

I AM YOURS...

...MY STRENGTH BREAKS AGAINST YOURS...
...I GIVE MYSELF TO YOUR EVERY CRUELTY...
...YOU HUMILIATE ME--
--PUNISH ME--
--I BEG YOU--
--NOT TO STOP--

SUDDENLY AN *ALARM* GOES OFF.

SUDDENLY I'M STONE COLD *SOBER.*

SUDDENLY I'M STANDING OVER AN UNCONSCIOUS *SECURITY GUARD* ON *LEVEL ONE*, HOLDING THE *BREAKER* DOWN, SHUTTING OFF THE *POWER* IN THE WHOLE *BASE*, FEELING LIKE A DOG IN *HEAT* AND A PERFECT *ASSHOLE.*

HOW'D SHE...

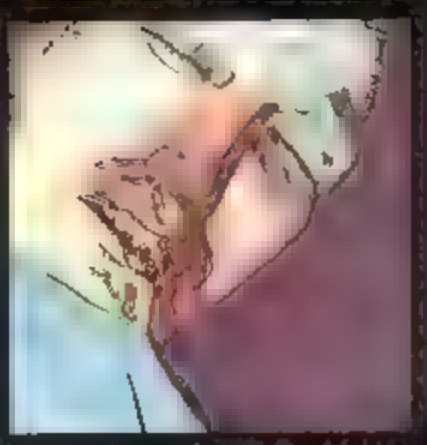
ISN'T GOING TO BE *EASY* TO DIG MY WAY OUT OF *THIS* ONE...

VIDEO ADDENDUM, OPERATION SCRAMBLED EGGS, SPECIAL AGENT GARRETT DICTATING. JANE DOE ASSUMED TO HAVE ASSASSINATED CARLOS HUEVOS HAS ESCAPED THE SAN CONCEPCION BASE.

S.H.I.E.L.D

RESPONDING TO A PRIVATE CALL FROM AGENT MORGEN AT 2:52 A.M., I RACED TO THE BASE JANE DOE WAS NOT IN THE PROBE CHAMBER.

AGENT MORGEN WAS DEAD UPON MY ARRIVAL. *RESEARCH* HAS DIAGNOSED HIS DEATH AS THE RESULT OF A *BRAIN HEMHORRHAGE* BROUGHT ON BY *PSYCHIC FEEDBACK* FROM JANE DOE.



I WAS CALLING *SECURITY* WHEN THE *LIGHTS* WENT OUT. SUSPECTING SABOTAGE, I HURRIED TO *LEVEL ONE*, TO FIND SECURITY GUARD *FREDRICKSON* UNCONSCIOUS AND THE *POWER MAIN* SWITCHED *OFF.*

I RESTORED POWER AND ALERTED SECURITY. JANE DOE HAD ALREADY ESCAPED, AS SILENTLY AND INVISIBLY AS SHE HAD BROKEN IN.

I HAVE BEGUN SEARCHING FOR JANE DOE. I REQUEST AUTHORITY TO USE *LETHAL FORCE...*

S.H.I.E.L.D

"PRELIMINARY VIDEO REPORT, PSYCHOLOGICAL. SUBJECT JANE DOE, CROSS-REFERENCE OPERATION SCRAMBLED EGGS. DR. ERNEST HASSLER, ADMINISTRATOR, DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY, SAN CONCEPCION BASE, DICTATING.

S.H.I.E.L.D

"SUBJECT HAS REMAINED NON-VERBAL SINCE ADMISSION. MIND PROBE, HOWEVER, HAS PROVIDED SUFFICIENT DATA TO CONSTRUCT WORKING PERSONALITY PROFILE.

"SUBJECT IS CLEARLY CATEGORICALLY PSYCHOTIC. TOXIFICATION [SEE PHYSIOLOGICAL REPORT] MAY BE A FACTOR. SUBJECT'S FANTASY LIFE IS RICH IN OEDIPAL IMAGERY...

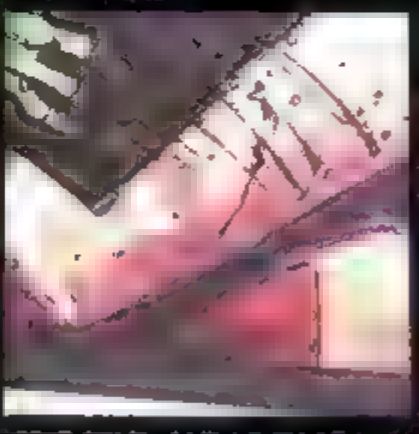
"...MOST COMMON FANTASY IMAGE IS THAT OF A DISTINGUISHED, MIDDLE-AGED MAN, PRESUMABLY SUBJECT'S FATHER, A DISTORTED IMAGE THEREOF, OR A SUBSTITUTED FATHER FIGURE.

"ALL PROMINENT FANTASY IMAGERY FITS A PATTERN OF FATHER-FIXATION. MOST NOTABLE ARE: UNITED STATES AMBASSADOR **REICH**, PORTRAYED AS SOME SORT OF **ZOMBIE**...

"...AND A MYTHIC, EVEN JUNGIAN FIGURE REFERRED TO IN THE SUBJECT'S THOUGHTS AS "**THE BEAST**", REPEATED FANTASY INVOLVES THE "**BEAST**" FIGURE SEIZING MENTAL CONTROL OVER AMBASSADOR REICH.

"REFERENCE IS FREQUENTLY MADE TO "**MISSION**"--THERE IS NO QUESTION THAT SUBJECT IS DETERMINED TO MURDER REICH TO THWART UNSPECIFIED PLANS OF THE "**BEAST**" FIGURE.

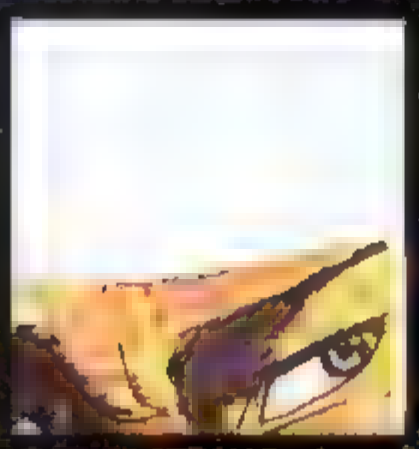
"WOUND ON THIGH, PRESUMABLY, SELF-INFLICTED, IS ATTRIBUTED BY SUBJECT TO PHYSICAL COMBAT WITH THE "**BEAST**" FIGURE.



"ENTIRE FANTASY FITS PATTERN OF INFANTILE DELUSION OF "GOOD PARENT" REPLACED BY "BAD PARENT". SEXUAL IMAGERY THROUGHOUT AGAIN FITS CLASSIC PATTERN OF OEDIPAL DILEMA.

"**BEAST**" FIGURE SEEMS COMPARABLE TO CHRISTIAN "**ANTICHRIST**". VIOLENCE IN FANTASY SUGGESTS RESTRICTED SEXUAL URGES. A SEVERE CHRISTIAN UPBRINGING IS INFERRED.

"REJECTION OF CHRISTIANITY TAKES THE FORM OF FIXATION ON EASTERN RELIGION AND MYTHOLOGY, MOSTLY IN POPULAR CULTURE IDIOM "**NINJA**", INDICATING FANTASY LIFE HAS BEEN FED BY MEDIA VIOLENCE.



"CURIOUS ANTHROPOMORPHIC HALLUCINATIONS HAVE BEEN OBSERVED. THESE I REGARD AS ATTEMPTS TO RECONCILE INFANTILE DELUSIONS OF OMNIPOTENCE WITH REAL WORLD EXPERIENCE.

"RECOMMENDATION: HEAVY SEDATION. GIVEN THAT SUBJECT IS CLEARLY HOMICIDAL, OPTION OF LOBOTOMIZATION SHOULD NOT BE DISMISSED."

S.H.I.E.L.D

SURE, HASSLER. AND MAYBE IF YOU'D GOTTEN YOUR **REPORT** IN UNDER **DEADLINE**, WE'D HAVE TAKEN YOUR **ADVICE** AND TURNED HER **BRAIN** OFF--

--SAVING **ME** A POUND OR TWO OF **LYING.**

STILL, I'VE GOT TO **HAND** IT TO HASSLER. MADE A LOT OF **SENSE** OUT OF HER.

IT'S ALL **WRONG** --BUT IT MAKES **SENSE.**

S.H.I.E.L.D

TO: HAROLD BEAKER DIRECTOR
BAN CONCEPCION
FROM: FURY

RE: REQUEST FOR EXTREME SANCTION

FORGET IT. I WANT HER ALIVE.

FURY

MORE SENSE THAN THE LATEST FROM OUR WAR HERO **DIRECTOR.**

WAR HERO **FAGGOT.** DOESN'T **KNOW** WHAT KIND OF AGENCY HE'S **RUNNING.**

I KNOW THE **SCORE**, ORDERS OR **NOT.** I CATCH ELEKTRA TRYING TO KILL REICH, AND THERE'S **NOTHING** I CAN DO WRONG -- EXCEPT LET HIM **DIE.**

REICH'S MEETING THAT **PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE** AT THE AIRPORT TOMORROW. HE'LL BE GOOD AND **EXPOSED.** SHE'LL MAKE HER **MOVE.**

I'LL BE **THERE**, DUMPLING.

NOT WITH AN AGENCY-ISSUED **PEA-SHOOTER**, THIS TIME.

I'M THIS **BABY** AT YOUR SIDE OF THE **PLANET**, AND YOU'RE IN **PIECES**, ELEKTRA...

RKKACK!

YOU CHECK YOUR **WATCH** AND SHIFT YOUR **FEET** AND SMOKE YOUR **CIGARETTE.**

YOU ARE SO **CERTAIN** THAT I WILL KILL REICH **HERE**, AT THE **AIRPORT.**

YOU KNOW **NOTHING** OF MY METHODS. IT WOULD BE **LOUD** HERE. IN THIS CROWD TOO MANY THINGS COULD GO **WRONG.**

MURDER IS A **PRECISE** ART, GARRETT. .

...BUT **YOU** ONLY WANT TO FIRE THAT VERY LARGE **GUN** OF YOURS...

..I COULD KILL YOU SO **EASILY...**

SO **EASILY...**

...PLEASE BELIEVE ME, BEA--MR BEAKER. I DID MY BEST...

...NO, SIR, I GUESS IT WASN'T GOOD ENOUGH... BUT, SIR, I DON'T THINK WE EVER HAD A CHANCE AGAINST HER. . ONCE I EXPLAIN, YOU'LL SEE WHAT I MEAN--AND WHY MY REQUEST FOR TRANSFER IS...

...YES SIR, I GUESS YOU HAVE WAITED LONG ENOUGH FOR MY REPORT...

...AS YOU KNOW, DR. HASSLER'S PSYCHOLOGICAL REPORT INDICATED THAT THE WOMAN INTENDED TO KILL AMBASSADOR REICH.

...NO, SIR. NO SIGN OF HER AT THE AIR-PORT.

SHE MUST HAVE WORN A DISGUISE, SIR...

...MOVED IN CLOSE TO ME...

...AND STOLE MY GUN.

...YES SIR, IT WAS QUITE EMBARRASSING.

BUT FRANKLY, MR. BEAKER, WE WERE OUTCLASSED FROM THE START.

EVEN WHEN WE HELD HER PRISONER--EVERYTHING WENT THE WAY SHE WANTED IT TO.

PERHAPS IF THE REPORT OF *COMPUTER ACTIVITY* DUR NG HER TIME AS OUR CAPTIVE HAD BEEN FILED SOONER I WOULD HAVE *UNDERSTOOD* WHAT SHE...

...NO, SIR, I DON'T MEAN TO MAKE *EXCUSES*. BUT IF I'D KNOWN THAT THE WHOLE TIME WE WERE PROBING *HER* SHE WAS PROBING *US*... LEARNING OUR *SECURITY PROCEDURES*... GOD KNOWS HOW...

...WHICH GETS BACK TO MY *REQUEST*...

...YES, SIR. OF COURSE, SIR. IT WAS THE NEXT DAY AT THE *HOTEL*, WHEN THINGS WENT SO BADLY FOR US...

...YES, SIR. AT THE *RECEPTION*.

WIND WAS GREETED AS IF HE'D ALREADY *WON* THE U.S. PRESIDENCY. THE *FOOD* AND *BOOZE* ALONE PROBABLY BOOSTED THE LOCAL *ECONOMY* AS MUCH AS A NEARBY *WAR* WOULD...

...NO, SIR, I'M NOT BEING *SARCASTIC*...

...NO, SIR, I WASN'T MEANING TO CRITICIZE... IF IT'S OKAY WITH THE *AGENCY* IT'S FINE WITH *ME*...

...I'M JUST A *COG*, SIR... A LITTLE *COG* IN THE GREAT, BIG *MACHINE*...

.. OH, NO, SIR, I DIDN T *DRINK*. NEVER ON THE JOB, MR. BEAKER...

...YES, SIR. I NOTICED AN *AIDE* TO MR WIND, WITH A *LOCAL* GIRL ... *HE'D* BEEN DR.NKING...

...HE WAS MAKING QUITE A *SHOW* OF HIS *AFFECTIONS* FOR THE GIRL.

AND SHE WAS NOT EXACTLY *DEFENDING* HER VIRTUE...

REICH HADN'T EVEN FINISHED INTRODUCING MIND WHEN THE COUPLE HEADED FOR THE DOOR.

THAT WAS WHEN THE STRANGEST THING HAPPENED. THE LOCAL GIRL--SHE LOOKED AT ME--

--AND TURNED INTO THE KILLER--

--AND WINKED AT ME.

THAT'S WHAT I SAW, S.I.R.

MY WORD OF HONOR.

I BELIEVE SHE EXERTED SOME KIND OF MIND CONTROL OVER ME--

--TO KEEP ME FROM NOTICING SHE'D LEFT HER PURSE ON ONE OF THE TABLES.

REST ROOMS

I FOLLOWED THEM TO THE MEN'S ROOM...

...NO, SIR. I DIDN'T HAVE A GUN. YOUR ORDER WAS QUITE FIRM.

YES, SIR. I'M SENSITIVE TO THE NEED FOR DISCIPLINE.

YES, SIR. I FOUND THE AIDE IN THE MEN'S ROOM.

HE HAD BEEN SUBDUED.

HERE'S WHERE I GET TO MY REQUEST FOR TRANSFER, S.I.R. YOU'LL SEE HOW THE AGENCY'S BEST INTERESTS WOULD BE... YES, SIR... SHE CALLED ME FROM AN AIR VENT, SIR.

...NO, SIR, SHE DIDN'T SPEAK...

...IT WAS... A FEELING...

...YES, SIR, IT SOUNDS *RIDICULOUS*. BUT THERE IT *WAS*--

--AND THERE I WAS, CRAWLING ALONG THE *SHAFT*... *SMELLING* HER...

...NO, SIR, I CAN'T EXPLAIN IT. IT'S HARD ENOUGH TO *DESCRIBE*. A *MIND LINK* OR SOMETHING...

...YES, SIR, YOU'RE ABSOLUTELY RIGHT. I'M NOT *QUALIFIED* TO GUESS. THAT'S WHY THE *PARAPSYCH* DIVISION IN *AMERICA* WOULD...

...YES, SIR. I WAS IN THE *SHAFT* WHEN I HEARD THE *EXPLOSION*.

THEN I HEARD PEOPLE *SHOUTING* AND *RUNNING*.

IT TURNED OUT LATER TO BE NOTHING MORE THAN A *SMOKE BOMB*... YES, SIR, HER *PURSE*.

FOLLOWING *PROCEDURE*, FELLMEN AND LUNA MOVED *KEN WIND* FROM THE HALL...

...WHILE *BROZOWSKI* TOOK THE *AMBASSADOR* TO A *BACK ROOM*.

PROCEDURE, SIR. SHE *KNEW* OUR *SECURITY PROCEDURE*.

SHE KNEW *EXACTLY* WHICH *ROOM* HE'D BE IN.

EXACTLY WHICH *CHAIR* HE'D SIT ON.

EXACTLY WHERE HIS *HEART* WOULD BE.

...YES, SIR, A TERRIBLE DEFEAT FOR US.

BUT IT WAS JUST AT THAT MOMENT WHEN...

...WELL, HERE'S WHERE WE GET RIGHT DOWN TO IT, MR. BEAKER. HERE'S WHERE YOU'LL *SEE* THAT YOU *MUST* SEND ME TO THE STATES...

...YES, SIR. SUDDENLY, I WAS RIGHT IN THE WOMAN'S *MIND*. I COULD *HEAR* HER *THOUGHTS*...

I HAVE *DEFEATED* THE *BEAST*.

HOW *STRANGE* --THAT I STILL *SMELL*--THE *MILK*--

--THE *MILK* THAT MADE *REICH* A *SLAVE* TO THE BEAST--

--IT IS *THICK*-- IT--

--IT COMES--

--FROM THE *AMERICAN*.

KEN WIND.

THIS IS WHY REICH *INVITED* HIM--

--TO MAKE A *SLAVE* --OF THE NEXT AMERICAN *PRESIDENT*.

KEN WIND.

I MUST *FOLLOW* HIM.

HE MUST *DIE*.

SURE, I HAD TO KISS BEAKER'S **ASS** AND BEG LIKE A **BABY.**

IT WAS **WORTH** IT.

I GOT THE *TRANSFER.*

FINALLY GET TO SAY *GOOD-BYE* TO THIS *FLEABAG* AND THIS ROTTEN, BACKWATER *COUNTRY.*

LIFE'S BEEN **WORSE.**

"VISIBLY **SHAKEN** BY THE LATEST **GALLUP POLL**, THE PRESIDENT **POSTPONED** HIS TRIP TO CAMP DAVID..."

"I'M NO **LOSER.** I **WON** THE LAST ELECTION. I'M THE PRESIDENT."

THIS IS **ONE** FLIGHT I WON'T BE **LATE** FOR...

...BET YOUR **ASS**...

...GOD, IT'S BEEN TWELVE YEARS...

"...WHILE CANDIDATE **KEN WIND**, ARRIVING TODAY FROM **SOUTH AMERICA**, SEEMED **CONFIDENT**..."

"REMEMBER TO **VOTE**, AMERICA. THIS ELECTION WILL CHANGE THE COURSE OF HUMAN **HISTORY.**"

I **HAVE** EMPTIED MY POCKETS--

--IT'S JUST AN OLD **WAR WOUND**--

--PIECE OF **SHRAPNEL**-- **ALWAYS** SETS THESE THINGS OFF--

--LOOK, I'M GOING TO MISS MY **FLIGHT**--

--YOU DON'T HAVE TO SEARCH ME--

--JUST LOOK AT THIS--

--DON'T GIVE ME THAT GOD DAMN BLANK STARE--

--I'M A GOD DAMN AGENT OF SHIELD--

--NO, IT'S ALL RIGHT--I'M AUTHORIZED TO CARRY THAT--

--I'M A GOD DAMN AGENT OF--

--DAMN IT-- I'LL MISS MY FLIGHT--

--THEY'RE BOARDING FOR CHRIST'S SAKE--

--JESUS-- DON'T PLAY PROCTOLOGIST WITH ME--

--I'M AN AGENT OF-- OWW--

--WHAT THE HELL--

--WHERE'D THAT COME FROM--

--LOOK, IT'S EVIDENCE--

--I WORK THE NARCOTICS DIVISION--

--SHIT--

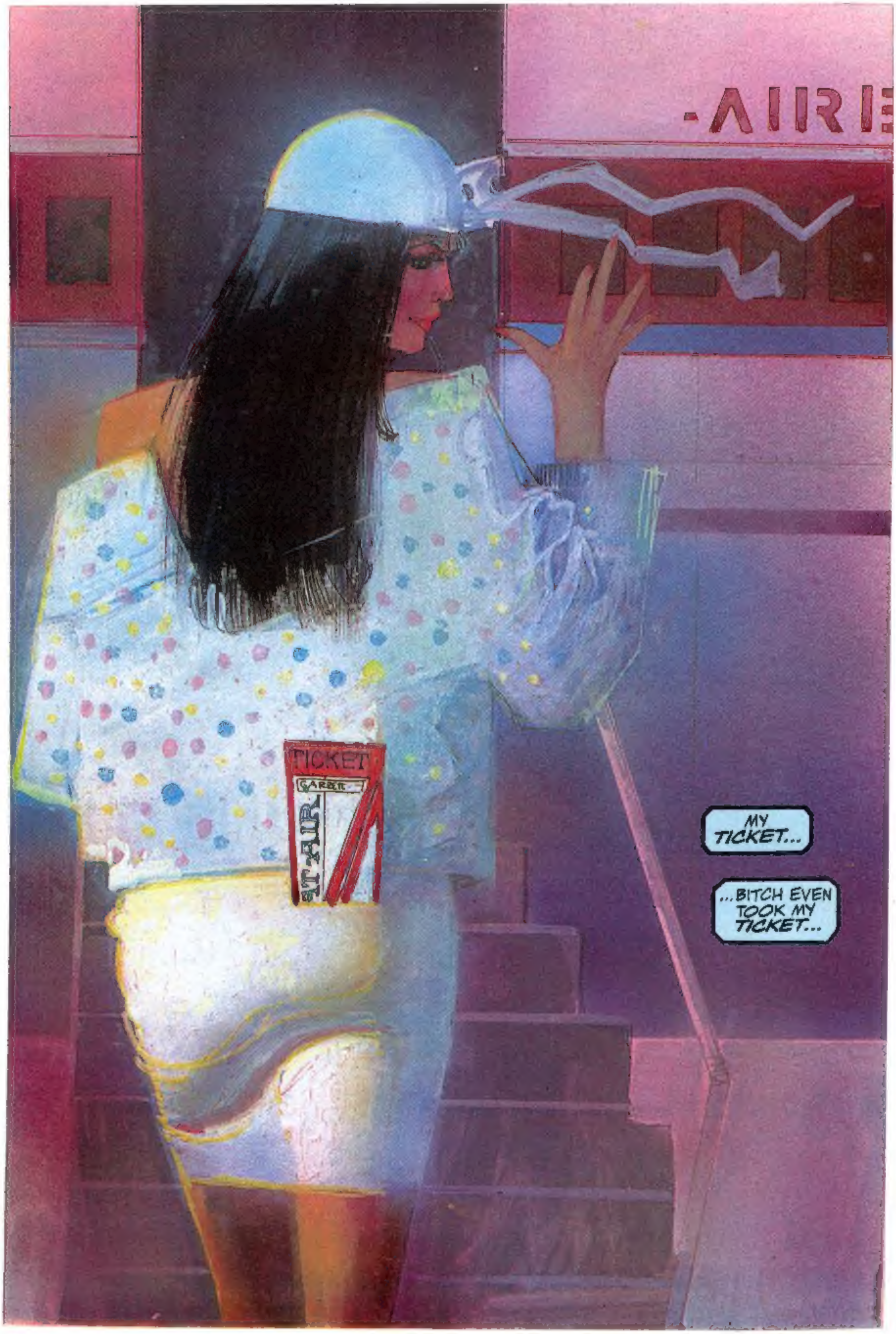
--ANY OF YOU MONKEYS SPEAK ENGLISH--

--I'M AN AGENT OF--

--NFF--

CHRIST, THEY'RE BOARDING --THEY--

--OH, SHIT...


TICKET
GARBAGE
AIR
MY TICKET...
...BITCH EVEN TOOK MY TICKET...